

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6063

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 8769

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG, UN, PO, NI

SUBJECT: PORTUGUESE ISSUES AT 29TH GA

REF: STATE 184584, 202939

SUMMARY: DIRECTOR MEA INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT
REVEALED THAT FMG SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING POSSIBILITY
OF RESUMPTION DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH GOP. REPORTEDLY
FMG HAD NOT GRANTED OVERFLIGHT CLEARANCES TO PORTUGUESE
AIRCRAFT BUT QUESTION COULD BE STUDIED ON CASE-BY-CASE
BASIS. END SUMMARY

1. WHILE DISCUSSING UNGA ISSUES WITH MEA DIRECTOR
INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT ADENIJI SEPTEMBER 17, EMBOFF
ALSO RAISED PORTUGUESE QUESTIONS, MAD POINTS
CONTAINED REFEELS, AND QUERIED ADENIJI ABOUT
PORTUGUESE OVERFLIGHT CLEARANCES.

2. ADENIJI COMMENTED THAT HE DID NOT SEE WHERE THERE
SHOULD BE AN ACRIMONIOUS DEBATE DURING THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.
HE AGREED WITH US ASSESSMENT THAT PORTUGUESE WERE INDEED
MAKING GREATER STRIDES IN PROCESS OF DECOLONIZATION. FMG
POSITION AT MOMENT IS TO OBSERVE SITUATION AND TO ENSURE
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THAT "IRREVERSIBLE TREND TOWARD DECOLONIZATION CONTINUES."

IN THIS CONNECTION HE NOTED THAT FMG CURRENTLY UNDERGOING RE-EXAMINATION OF ITS ATTITUDE TOWARDS PORTUGAL BUT THAT NO FINAL DECISION HAD BEEN REACHED. FMG WILL WATCH EVENTS DURING GA. IF, AS HE HOPES, SITUATION APPEARS TO BE FAVORABLE HE FULLY EXPECTED FMG TO FORMALLY RENEW DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH PORTUGAL. REASON FOR CURRENT HESITANCE IS THAT FMG IS AWARE OF CERTAIN ELEMENTS WITHIN GOP WHICH ARE SEEKING TO PUT BREAKS ON RAPID DECOLONIZATION IN PORTUGUESE TERRITORIES. HE FURTHER INDICATED THAT FMG HAD HAD CONTACTS WITH GOP BUT DID NOT ELABORATE.

3. RE QUESTION OF OVERFLIGHTS, ADENIJI COMMENTED THAT FIRST OVERFLIGHT BY PORTUGUESE AIRCRAFT HAD NOT, TO HIS KNOWLEDGE, RECEIVED FMG APPROVAL. FMG, HOWEVER, MADE NO INCIDENT. HE SUGGESTED THAT FMG WOULD BE RECEPTIVE TO OVERFLIGHT REQUESTS BUT ONLY ON CASE-BY-CASE BASIS. DESPITE ARGUMENTS MADE BY EMBOFF RE NECESSITY OF ENABLING GOP TO SIMPLIFY LOGISTICS DURING DECOLONIZATION PERIOD, ADENIJI AGAIN RESPONDED MATTER WOULD HAVE TO BE DEALT WITH ON CASE-BY-CASE BASIS.

4. COMMENT: IT POSSIBLE ADENIJI UNAWARE THAT GOP HAD REQUESTED OVERFLIGHT CLEARANCE AND THIS WOULD EXPLAIN HIS REMARK IN PARA 3. FMG APPEARS RECEPTIVE TO IDEA OF PORTUGUESE OVERFLIGHTS IF THEY FOR FACILITATION OF DECOLONIZATION EFFORTS. BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THERE NOTHING FURTHER EMBASSY CAN DO ON QUESTION OF GOP OVERFLIGHTS WITH FMG AT MOMENT. SUGGEST IT BETTER THAT DEPARTMENT REEPMEND TO GOP THAT IT APPROACH FMG EITHER DIRECTLY THROUGH ITS MISSION IN NEW YORK WHEN ARIKPO IN N.Y. OR THJBH AFRICAN COUNTRIES WHICH MIGHT BE BEST CONDUIT FOR SUCH APPROACHES.

5. IT WOULD APPEAR THAT ADENIJI'S USE OF "RENEW" AND "RESUMPTION" IN CONNECTION WITH RELATION MAY BE QUITE LOOSE, SINCE TO OUR KNOWLEDGE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS NEVER ESTABLISHED AFTER NIGERIAN INDEPENDENCE.
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